

Resolution of the provincial and territorial ministers responsible for culture and heritage concerning recent cuts in federal government programs (definitive version)

Recognizing that the cultural sector as a whole contributes, through its work, to the dynamism and cultural, social, economic and political development of our society;

Affirming that individuals, organizations and institutions in the arts and creative research sector deserve our support in order to make our culture known here and around the world;

Bearing in mind that the excellence and innovativeness of Canadian cultural expression attests to the modernity, vitality and plurality of our society and therefore contributes directly to developing Canada's identity in the international arena;

Voicing our deep disappointment about recent announcements by the Government of Canada to abolish several initiatives critical to the development of our cultural sector, such as:

- PromArt,
- Trade Routes,
- National Training Program for the Film and Video Sector,
- Canadian Independent Film and Video Fund,
- Canadian Memory Fund,
- New Media Research Networks Fund,
- New Media Research and Development Initiative,
- Canadian Cultural Observatory,
- Culture.ca portal,
- as well as several other abolished or severely slashed programs;

Pointing out that these decisions, representing more than 45 million dollars in cuts, will have an impact in particular to organizations working in the fields of international development, film, video and new media;

Considering that these federal initiatives are greatly valued by the entire cultural sector because artists and cultural organizations are able to access provincial, territorial and private sector funding as leverage to acquire federal funding;

Knowing that the decision by the Government of Canada compromises years of work by artists, organizations, public servants, diplomats and elected officials to develop and promote our cultural sector;

Reiterating our keen misgivings regarding the future and survival of artists, creators and cultural workers and their ability to carry out their many projects; the vitality of our cultural scene and its visibility worldwide; and the potential impacts of these decisions on the economic and social development of all Canadians and on their quality of life,

We, those provincial and territorial ministers responsible for culture and heritage who have gathered in Québec City on September 26, 2008, for our annual meeting, call upon the federal government to reverse its decision to reduce the investments in important cultural programs, and urge the federal government to:

- note our common concern;
- work with provinces and territories on solutions to support cultural development across Canada;
- and convene a special federal-provincial-territorial meeting as soon as possible after the federal elections to discuss this issue.